

PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
WAR OF THE REBELLION,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

FIFTH SERIES—No. 4.

PROVIDENCE:
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
1895.

The Providence Press:
SNOW & FARNHAM, PRINTERS
15 Custom House Street.
1895.

FROM FREDERICKSBURG

TO

GETTYSBURG.

BY

BENJAMIN H. CHILD,

[Late Sergeant Battery A, First Rhode Island
Light Artillery.]

PROVIDENCE :
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
1895.

[Edition limited to two hundred and fifty copies.]

FROM FREDERICKSBURG TO GETTYSBURG.

THE materials for my paper to-night are derived partially from my own experience and partially from facts that have passed into history. I had the good fortune, during the nearly four years of my service, to belong to a battery connected with the grand Old Second Corps, which had for its badge the trefoil or clover leaf, and which I think I can safely say did more hard fighting and lost more men than any other corps of the Army of the Potomac.

The fate of the invasion of Pennsylvania in July, 1863, was fully put at stake. Only a perfect infantry and artillery, educated in the midst of charges, could possibly have sustained the desperate assault of Longstreet, Ewell and Pickett.

The Second Corps, commanded by Maj.-Gen. Winfield S. Hancock, did sustain it, and covered itself with immortal honors by its constancy and courage. This corps will ever have the distinction

of breaking the pride and power of the rebels when they invaded Pennsylvania in the summer of 1863.

In all the four years of its existence the men of the Army of the Potomac never hailed an order with more delight than the one which withdrew us from before Fredericksburg and sent us North.

On that lovely summer day in June, 1863, we looked for the last time on Marye's Heights, and the monument of Washington's mother, which had been shattered and broken by shells from both armies and stood out there on the plain back of the city, mute and sorrowful, as though weeping for the misfortunes of her children. All the men rejoiced to leave the scenes of the last six months.

We withdrew from the line of the river after sunset. We had been stationed there so long that we were beginning to be forgotten as the "Army of the Potomac," and letters came to us directed to the "Army of the Rapahannock." As we marched away in the darkness our joy was not unmixed with sorrow, for there was not a veteran in the ranks who did not leave behind him the graves of noble and beloved comrades who had fought side by side with him.

We did not march away with all our army. When our campfires, which on this night burned with unusual brightness, went out and left the Valley of the Rappahannock in darkness, the living army was gone to be sure, but twenty thousand of our members lay over on the other side of the river, heroes of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. Thoughts of sadness soon gave way to those of a more buoyant nature. We felt when the head of the column turned toward the Capital that the road we trod would lead to victory.

The march to Gettysburg was one of the longest and most severe we had yet experienced. In thinking of war we are apt to look only at battles; to hear the dread sound of strife; to see the deadly, gaping wounds; and we are ready to crown the survivors or give honors to those who fell. But the hardships of the march; the heat of summer--the cold of winter; the entire absence of every comfort and luxury in active service, is overlooked or forgotten by those who do not participate. Napoleon, when retreating from Moscow, lost most of his men through excessive cold, but our experience was directly the reverse on the way to Gettysburg.

One day, I think it was the second out from Falmouth, our corps, the Old Second, lost more than a dozen men from sunstroke. They fell dead by the wayside. On our march we crossed the battlefield of Bull Run, where, the year before, General Pope had met with disastrous defeat. No effort had been made to bury the dead properly. A little earth, which the rain had washed away, had been thrown over them where they fell and their skeletons lay exposed to view as we passed through.

The route of the Second Corps to Gettysburg was over 200 miles in length. Some days we marched fifteen, on other days eighteen miles were traversed, but on the 29th of June this corps completed the longest march made by any infantry during the war. Leaving Frederick City, Md., in the morning, we did not halt until 11 p. m. beyond Uniontown, a distance of thirty-four miles.

When I look back over the thirty-one years which have intervened since then, and my mind reverts to this march of the Second Corps, I think of the perfect discipline in the ranks, the cheerfulness with which the enlisted men with their load of fifty

pounds weight—musket and ammunition, knapsack and cartridge-box, shelter tent and blanket, canteen and rations—trudged along under the broiling sun in the hottest month in our year.

There is not a resident on all that line of march who can tell of a single act of vandalism by any of the men. In the rich and cultivated country through which we passed life and property were respected as much as though there had been no war and we were living in peaceful days. Old and young came to the roadside to see the army pass, and knew they were safe from insult or molestation of any kind. The fields of ripening grain waved untrampled on when the corps had gone by. The perfection of discipline in the ranks at this period was wonderful. The armies that fought in the war of 1861 differed very widely from the armies of other countries in this respect. And so we passed on to Thoroughfare Gap, Edward's Ferry, Frederick, Md., to Uniontown and Taneytown, where, on the morning of July 1st, the Second Corps was massed and where General Meade's headquarters had been established.

While the corps was filing into the fields to the right and left of the road, and settling down for a rest and to wait for orders, General Hancock rode over to General Meade and entered into conversation with him. As they were talking a mounted officer dashed up bringing the intelligence that fighting had begun at Gettysburg thirteen miles distant.

The news was meagre—only that there was fighting. That was all. Yet it caused a great surprise, unaware as we were of the near proximity of the enemy. It was enough to send a thrill through the veteran ranks. The road leading to Gettysburg is scanned with anxious eyes, and soon away in the distance rises a cloud of dust. It comes nearer and nearer and another messenger from the front is with us. He tells us that Reynolds is killed or mortally wounded; that the First and Eleventh Corps are fighting, and that the battle is against us.

It is now 1 o'clock, too late for the Second Corps to reach the field that day and take part in stemming the tide of rebel victory. But not so thought their commander. General Meade orders Hancock to proceed to the front and take command

of all the troops. This order was issued at ten minutes past one P. M., and within twenty minutes Hancock with his staff was on the road to Gettysburg. The Second Corps promptly followed General Hancock, its commander, and it required no urging to keep the men up. Each regiment and battery moved forward solidly and rapidly. Not a straggler could be seen, and the thirteen miles were soon covered. But as they hurried along the crowded turnpike a halt was ordered, the ranks opened and an ambulance passed bearing the dead body of the heroic general, John F. Reynolds. The corps pushed on to within two miles of the battleground, and there we halted and camped that night. We arrived on the field early next morning.

As General Hancock proceeded to the front he rode part of the way in an ambulance so that he might examine the maps of the country. His aide, Major Mitchell, galloped ahead to announce his coming to General Howard, whom he found on Cemetery Hill, and to him he told his errand, giving him to understand that General Hancock was coming up to take command.

At 3:30 P. M. General Hancock rode up to General Howard, informed him that he had come to take command, and asked him if he wished to see his written orders. Howard answered: "No, no, Hancock; go ahead." At this moment our defeat seemed to be complete. Our troops were pouring through the streets of the town in great disorder, closely pursued by the Confederates. The retreat soon became a rout, and in a few minutes the enemy would have been in possession of Cemetery Hill—the key to the situation—and the Battle of Gettysburg would have gone into history as a rebel victory.

But what a change came over the scene during the next half hour! The presence of Hancock, like that of Sheridan, was magnetic. Order came out of chaos. The flying troops halt and again face the enemy. The battalions of Howard's corps that were retreating down the Baltimore Pike are called back, and with a cheer they go into position on the crest of Cemetery Hill, where the division of Steinwehr had already been stationed. Wadsworth's division and a battery are sent to hold Culp's Hill, and Geary, with the White Star division, goes on

the double quick to occupy the high grounds toward Round Top. Confidence is restored, the enemy checked, and, deceived by these dispositions, cease their attack.

General Hancock was fully aware that General Meade had determined to fight the battle on the line of Pike Creek, but, noting the topographical advantages of the ground around Gettysburg, he determined to advise General Meade to fight there. He knew that this line, the crest of Cemetery Ridge, with Culp's Hill on the right, Round Top on the left and Cemetery Hill in the centre, could not be bettered. So, when order had taken the place of confusion, and our lines were once more intact, he sent his senior aide, Major Mitchell, back to General Meade with the information that, in his judgment, Gettysburg was the place at which to fight the battle. Major Mitchell found General Meade in the evening at Taneytown and communicated these views. General Meade listened attentively, and on these representations he fortunately concluded to abandon his idea of fighting on the line of Pipe Creek, and fight the battle at Gettysburg. Turning

to Gen. Seth Williams, his adjutant-general, he said: "Order up all the troops; we will fight here."

The morning of July 2d, the second day of the battle, dawned clear and bright. It discovered Hancock pushing the Second Corps on Cemetery Ridge. As yet no one in that corps, with the exception of the general and his staff, had heard a shot fired. As we approached Gettysburg the day before, the sounds of the conflict, owing either to the direction of the wind or the formation of the country, were wholly inaudible. Those who came upon the field after nightfall had no idea of the whereabouts of the enemy. But, as daylight increased and objects became visible, we saw their lines nearly a mile distant on Seminary Ridge, and away to our left rose Little Round Top, and still further on Round Top. The day grew apace. Not a shot nor a hostile sound broke the stillness of the morning. It became evident that the enemy was not ready to renew the fight.

Our corps had got into position, and in a wood just back of our line the birds caroled and sang

loud and long. The horses quietly browsed in the rich grass, and the men lay in groups peacefully enjoying a rest after the rapid march of the day before. The troops, as they arrived on the field or changed their positions, did so leisurely and unmolested.

Sickles, with the Third Corps, came up and went into position on our left, and Geary took his division over to Culp's Hill. About 10 o'clock in the forenoon, picket firing was heard toward Little Round Top, which continued at intervals until long after noon, and at times became quite sharp. Three o'clock came, but with it came no sign of a general engagement. The boys had partly recovered from their fatigue and were actually beginning to enjoy life. Some of them indulged in quiet games of euchre, while others toasted their hard tack or fried a little bacon at the small fires in the rear of the lines.

Shortly after three o'clock a movement was apparent at our left. From the place where our division lay the whole country in front and far to our left, away to the Peach Orchard and to

the Little Round Top, was in full view. Our division stood in brigade columns, and when it became evident that something was going to take place the boys dropped their cards, regardless of what was the trump—even the men who held both bowers and the ace—and all gathered on the most favorable position to see the opening of the ball. Soon the long line of the Third Corps was seen advancing, and how splendidly they did march! On they went. Out toward the Peach Orchard. Not a shot is fired. A few minutes pass, and then some one calls out, “There!” and points to where a puff of smoke is seen rising against the dark green of the woods. Another and another cloud is seen until the whole face of the forest is enveloped and the dread sound of artillery comes loud and quick and shells are seen bursting in all directions. The bright colors of the regiments are conspicuous marks, and the shells burst around them in great numbers. The musketry begins. The infantry are engaged, and the battle extends along the whole front of Sickles’s Corps. Now sounds come from Little Round Top; smoke

rises among the trees and from all the high and wooded ground to the left of the Peach Orchard.

An hour passes slowly and our troops give way and are falling back, but slowly, very slowly. Every inch of the ground is hotly contested. The Third Corps is not in the habit of giving it up. They hold their own well. But the odds are against them and they are forced to retire. Now help is called for, and Hancock tells Caldwell to have his division ready. "Fall in," and the men run to their places. "Take arms," and the four brigades of Zook, Cross, Brook and Kelly are ready for the fray.

The Irish Brigade, which had been commanded formerly by Gen. Thomas F. Meagher, and whose green flag was unfurled in every battle in which the Army of the Potomac was engaged from the first Bull Run to Appomattox, was now commanded by Colonel Patrick Kelly, of the Eighty-eighth New-York Regiment, and it formed part of this division. The brigade stood in column of regiments closed in mass. As a large majority of its members were Catholic, the chaplain of the brigade,

the Rev. William Corley, proposed to give a general absolution to all the men before going into the fight. While this is customary in the armies of Catholic countries of Europe, it was perhaps the first time it was ever witnessed on this continent. Father Corley stood upon a large rock in front of the brigade, and, addressing his men, he explained what he was about to do, and said that each one could receive the benefit of the absolution by making a sincere act of contrition, and firmly resolving to embrace the first opportunity of confessing their sins. He urged them to do their duty well, and reminded them of the high and sacred nature of their trust as soldiers, and the noble objects for which they fought. He ended by saying that the Catholic Church refused Christian burial to the soldier who turned his back to his foe or deserted his flag. The scene was more than impressive. It was awe-inspiring. Near by stood Hancock, surrounded by a brilliant throng of officers who had gathered to witness the unusual occurrence. While there was profound silence in the ranks of the Second Corps, yet, over to the left, out by the Peach Orchard and

Little Round Top, where Weed, Vincent and Hazlitt were dying, the roar of battle rose and swelled and re-echoed through the woods making music more sublime than ever sounded through cathedral aisle. The act seemed to be in harmony with the surroundings. I do not think there was a man in the brigade who did not offer up a heartfelt prayer. For some it was their last. They knelt there in their grave clothes. In less than a half an hour many of them were numbered with the dead of July 2d.

About 4 o'clock in the afternoon Caldwell's division of the Second Corps moved off by the left flank and marched rapidly. They had hardly got under way when the enemy's batteries opened. The ground on which this division faced the enemy that afternoon had already been fought over and over again, and the fields and woods were strewn with the killed and wounded.

Anderson and McLaws (Confederates) had driven our troops from the Peach Orchard and the line on which Sickles had placed the Third Corps. Arriving on the rising ground to the left of the Peach Orchard, General De Trobriand's Brigade had been

pushed back out of the woods and across the wheat field, after a gallant fight.

As this division advanced, many of the shattered regiments of the Third Corps passed to the rear through the intervals in our lines. They retired in good order and with colors flying. To the left of the wheat-field General Cross deployed his brigade. The Irish Brigade passed to the right and Brooks's brigade to the left. These brigades were in column of regiments when they appeared in front of the enemy. Suddenly the columns deployed on the double-quick, and forming line advanced to find the enemy. As they approached the crest of the rugged hill, from behind huge boulders that were everywhere scattered around, the men of Longstreet's Corps rose up and poured into our ranks a most destructive fire. This sudden reception somewhat astonished our boys. The Confederate lines were not more than thirty feet away when the firing opened. The astonishment did not last long, and our men promptly returned their fire, and for ten minutes the work of death went on. There was no cheering now; and no time

was lost in unnecessary movements. All the men, both in the Union and Rebel ranks, were veterans and knew just what to do. They stood face to face loading and firing, and so close that every shot told. In a short time the brigades of Cross and Brooks began forcing the enemy back, and then the Irish Brigade charged, the men rushing forward with a cheer, and were among the Johnnies in a few minutes. In an instant our men and their opponents had mingled together. In charging they had literally run in amongst them. Firing ceased. Officers and men for a brief space of time were bewildered. The firing had ceased, yet the "grey-backs" still retained their arms and showed no disposition to surrender. But just at this juncture a Union officer called out in a loud voice: "The Confederate troops will lay down their arms and go to the rear," and thus ended a scene that was becoming embarrassing to our troops. The order was obeyed, and a large number of Kershaw's rebel brigade became our prisoners.

While General Caldwell's division had been, in a manner, victorious in checking the attack at this

point and had taken many prisoners, they were still in a position of great danger. A line of battle was in their rear and another in front, and both moved to attack at once. As they got ready to repel the attack in front, Woffard's Georgia troops attacked their rear.

The brigades of Cross and Brooks were more fortunate than those of Zook and Kelly. The Confederate lines in our rear did not extend far enough to cover the first two brigades, but Kelly and Zook were completely surrounded, and the only way out of the trap was to pass down between the two rebel lines. This was determined upon, and the two brigades started on the double-quick—firing as they ran—towards Little Round Top, the only opening through which they could escape. Passing through this alley of death, where the bullets came as thick as hail, the larger part of the division got away, but the loss was terrible. In the half hour they were under fire the division lost fourteen hundred men. Of the four brigade commanders two were killed, Gen. S. K. Zook and Col. E. E. Cross. Cross fell almost at the first fire and Zook a few

minutes afterwards. On the morning of that day General Hancock said to Colonel Cross: "This is the last day you fight as colonel; to-day will make you a brigadier-general." Cross answered, firmly and sadly, as though he felt a presentiment of what was in store for him: "No, it is too late, General; I shall never wear the star; to-day I shall be killed." Just after Zook fell, Col. Richard P. Roberts, who succeeded to the command of the brigade, was shot through the heart. He was a gallant and much beloved officer. He had left a sick bed when he heard of Lee's moving into Pennsylvania, and, weak and emaciated though he was, he joined his regiment only two days before he was killed. Some of the men who fell in the wheat field during the retreat of this division, and were forced to lie there between the two fires, fared badly.

It was now getting late. The sun was nearing the horizon, but the battle was not yet ended. The wheat field was to have more victims. As Caldwell retired, Gen. R. B. Ayres came up and went in with his regulars. Another effort was to be made to gain the wooded crest that extended from Little

Round Top toward the Peach Orchard. As he advanced, he struck the flanks of the Confederates that had a short time before poured destruction into Caldwell's division. Ayres doubled them up and drove everything before him. Then McCandless took up the fight, and with the Pennsylvania Reserves succeeded in gaining and holding some of the lost ground.

The fighting at this point, during the evening of July 2d, was of a most sanguinary character, as each side contested the other with a dreadful earnestness. Four out of five of our best divisions charged over the same spot and were met every time by the choice troops of the enemy, both determined to hold the ridge in front of the wheat field.

Until toward dark the fight had gone against us. The fighting had extended along the line to the right almost half way to the cemetery. The evening and our prospects grew dark together. The Third Corps had been driven back, broken and shattered, its commander, General Sickles, wounded and carried from the field. The troops that had gone to its support fared no better, and every man felt that

the situation was critical. However, all was not lost. General Meade had again thought of Hancock, and as on the first day of July he was sent to stop the rout of the First and Eleventh Corps, he was now ordered to take command of the left. Once more he is sought. A half hour of daylight yet remains. It is, however, long enough to enable him to rally some of the scattered Union troops, face them once more to the front, gather reinforcements, drive back the enemy and restore our broken lines.

As the fight was closing upon the left of the Union Army Ewell was striking a terrific and successful blow on his right. As our troops poured in on the Taneytown road there was some difficulty in getting things in shape after the rough handling they had received. To our right and rear could be heard the peculiar yell of the Louisiana Tigers as they rushed over our works at Culp's Hill. This was the most anxious hour in the whole great battle. We had been driven on the left and on the right. The "Rebs" had effected a lodgment in our works—in one of our strongest positions—and

were, in fact, in our rear. Another hour of daylight and, unless some miracle had intervened, we should most likely have left Gettysburg without waiting to bid the residents "Good evening."

But, fortunately for us, there was no Joshua around Lee's headquarters, so the sun went down on almanac time, utterly regardless of the little troubles that we were trying to settle. Darkness fell upon the scene and prevented the Johnnies from taking further advantage of their success, and gave us a chance to repair our disaster. Few of us slept that night. General Hancock labored all night long strengthening his line. The men gathered rocks and fence-rails for breastworks. During the whole night mounted officers galloped to and fro and troops were hurried to important points.

As the first rays of light were visible across the horizon on the morning of July 3d, the fight was resumed on Culp's Hill, where darkness had interrupted it the night before, and long before broad daylight the fire was heavy and incessant. We knew that Slocum was trying to drive the "Rebs" out of our works. They had entered the works

the night before without invitation, and had occupied them and slept in them during the night. Culp's Hill was about one mile distant from the place where we lay. We could plainly hear the cheers of Geary's men borne to us on the morning air, with now and then a stray bullet. As the day advanced the artillery mingled with the musketry. The men now held their breath from sheer anxiety. At nine o'clock in the morning the firing ceased suddenly and a tremendous cheer went up. Culp's Hill was once more in our possession. This was succeeded by a brief respite—a perfect calm.

About noon we could see considerable activity along Seminary Ridge. Battery after battery unlimbered, the horses were taken to the rear, and the guns placed at the edge of the woods. On our side officers sat around in groups and anxiously watched the movements in our front, knowing full well what it meant. Shortly after one o'clock we knew all about it. The headquarters wagon had just been driven up and General Gibbon had invited General Hancock and staff to partake of lunch. The bread was handed round. It was

eaten without butter, for as an orderly was passing the latter a shell from Seminary Ridge cut him in two.

Instantly the air was filled with bursting shells. The batteries that we had been watching for the last two hours go into position in our front did not open singly or spasmodically. The whole 120 guns that had begun to play upon us seemed to be discharged simultaneously, as if by electricity. For nearly two hours the storm of death went on.

I have read many accounts of this artillery duel, but the most graphic description penned by the most able writer falls far short of the reality. No tongue or pen can find language equal to convey an adequate idea of its awfulness. Streams of screaming shells poured through the hot air, falling and bursting everywhere. Men and horses were torn limb from limb. Caissons exploded one after another in rapid succession, blowing the gunners to pieces. No spot within our line was free from the rain of iron. The infantry hugged closely to the earth, and sought all the shelter that the earthworks afforded. It was in the most perfect sense a storm of shot and shell,

such as the oldest soldiers then—those who had taken part in almost every battle up to this time during the war—had not seen equalled. That awful, rushing sound of flying missiles, a sound that causes the firmest hearts to quail, was everywhere.

At this terrible moment a deed of heroism, such as we are apt to attribute only to the knights of olden time, took place. General Hancock, mounted and accompanied by his staff, with the Second Corps flag flying in the hands of a brave Irishman—a private, James Wells, of the Sixth New York Cavalry—started at the right of his line, near the Taneytown road. He slowly rode along to the extreme left of his position, while shot and shell roared and crashed around him and every moment tore great gaps in the ranks by his side.

“Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well.”

It was a gallant deed and not a reckless exposure of life, for the presence and calm demeanor of the commander as he passed through the lines of his men was an example to them which an hour later bore good fruit and moved their stout hearts to win

the greatest and most decisive battle ever fought on this continent. For an hour after the fighting began our batteries replied vigorously and then ceased altogether. But the rebel shell came on as numerously as ever. Then, for nearly half an hour not a soul was seen stirring on our line. Suddenly the enemy stopped their fire, which had been continued for nearly two hours without intermission, and then a long line of infantry, 18,000 strong, emerged from the woods and began their advance. At this moment silence was universal along our whole line "with arms at right shoulder shift." A division of Longstreet's corps moved forward with a precision that was wonderful in its perfection. It is our time, and the line that a few minutes before seemed so still, now teemed with animation. Eighty of our guns open their brazen mouths, and solid shot and shell are sent on their errand of destruction. In quick succession we see them fall in countless numbers among the advancing troops. The accuracy of our artillery fire could not be excelled. The missiles strike right in their ranks, tearing and rending them in all directions. The ground over

which they have passed is strewn with the dead and wounded. On they come, the gaps in their ranks are closed as soon as made. They have a half a mile to pass exposed to our fire; nearly half the distance has been traversed. Our gunners now load with double canister, and the effect is appalling in the extreme. But still they march on. Now they are within a hundred yards. Our infantry rise up and pour round after round into these heroic troops. At Waterloo the Old Guard recoiled before a less severe fire. But there was no recoil in these men of the South. They marched right on as though they courted death. They concentrate in great numbers and strike on the most advanced part of our line. The crash of the musketry and the cheers of the men blend together. The Philadelphia Brigade occupy this point. They are fighting on their own ground and for their own State, and in the bloody hand-to-hand engagement which ensues the Confederates, though fighting with desperate valor, find it impossible to dislodge them. They are rooted to the ground! Seeing how utterly hopeless further efforts are, and knowing of the impossi-

bility of their being able to reach their lines were they to retreat, a large number of the rebels lay down their arms, and the battle is won.

To the left of the Philadelphia Brigade the enemy did not get to such close quarters. Seeing the utter annihilation of Pickett's troops, the division of Wilcox and others on their right went to pieces almost before they got within musket range. A few of them ran back and tried to regain their lines, but many laid down their arms and came in as prisoners. It was at this critical moment that General Hancock fell among his men, on the line of Stannard's Vermont Brigade, desperately wounded, but he continued to direct the fight until victory was assured. It was then that he sent Major Mitchell to announce the glad tidings to the commander of the army. Said he: "Tell General Meade that the troops under my command have repulsed the assault of the enemy, who are now flying in all directions in my front." "Say to General Hancock," was General Meade's reply, "I regret exceedingly that he is wounded, and I thank him for the country and myself for the service he has rendered to-day."

Truly the country may thank General Hancock, as Congress did, for his great service on that field. Five thousand prisoners were sent to the rear. There were gathered up thirty-three regimental Confederate standards in front of the Second Corps. The remaining hours of daylight on that eventful day were devoted to the care of the wounded, looking over the field, and talking over the incidents of the fight. Many noble officers and men were lost on both sides, and in the camp hospitals they died by hundreds during the afternoon and night. The rebel General Armistead died in this way. As he was being carried to the rear he was met by Captain Harry Bingham, of Hancock's staff, who, getting off his horse, asked him if he could do anything for him. Armistead, in reply, asked him to take his watch and spurs to General Hancock, that they might be sent to his relatives. His wishes were complied with, and General Hancock sent them to his friends. General Armistead was a brave soldier, with a chivalric presence, and came forward in front of his brigade waving his sword. He was shot through the body and fell inside our lines.

Some of the wounded rebels showed considerable animosity to our men. One of them, who lay mortally wounded in front of the Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania, sullenly refused to be taken to the hospital. He said he wanted to die on the field where he fell. In front of the Philadelphia Brigade the dead lay in great heaps. Dismounted guns, ruins of exploded caissons, dead and mutilated men and horses were piled up together in every direction.

Out on the field, where Pickett's division of Longstreet's corps had passed, thousands of dead and wounded were lying. We had no means of reaching these poor fellows, and many lay there between the lines until the morning of the fifth.

The enemy could be seen moving around on Seminary Ridge.

Welcome supplies came up and were issued. All hands felt cheerful, but there was a degree of uncertainty as to whether the battle was really over, or whether the rebels were getting ready for some new movement, that prevented us from celebrating the national anniversary in a proper manner. Once in a while a rebel sharpshooter would try his skill

on some of our boys to let us know they were still there. The stench from the dead became intolerable, and we tried to escape it by digging up the ground and burying our faces in the fresh earth.

On the morning of the fifth we found the enemy had gone, and then what a scene. The first intimation our boys heard of it was by tremendous cheering in the direction of Culp's Hill. And what a cheer that was! A cheer that swelled into a roar that was taken up by the boys on Cemetery Ridge, and rolled along the crest to Round Top, and then back again. Cheers for the Philadelphia Brigade that stood a living wall against which the rebel hosts beat in vain. Cheers for Meade, who here began with a great victory his illustrious career as a commander of the Army of the Potomac. Cheers for Hancock, who had stemmed the tide of defeat on the first day and selected the ground on which the glorious victory had been achieved; who on the second day again stopped the tide of rebel victory and restored our shattered lines, and on the third day had met and repulsed the final assault on which Lee's all was staked, and who won the battle that was really the death-blow to the Rebellion.

